

Message Text

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43

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CCO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USSS-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19

IO-14 EUR-25 AF-10 A-01 OPR-02 SY-10 OC-06 DRC-01

/178 W

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P 171550Z OCT 73

FM USINT CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4049

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY

USMISSION USUN PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 3161

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS PFOR EG IS

SUBJECT: ISRAELI TASK FORCE ON WEST BANK OF CANAL

1. VARIOUS SOURCES HAVE REPORTED THAT ISRAELI TASK FORCE MENTIONED BY MRS. MEIR IN OCTOBER 16 SPEECH HAS NOW BEEN ENCIRCLED AND FINISHED. IF REPORTS ARE CORRECT, ISRAELI FORCE WAS TRAPPED AND ERADICATED ONLY SEVERAL KILOMETERS FROM POINT OF CROSSING AT NORTH END OF BITTER LAKE.

2. INEVITABLE QUESTION CONCERNS REASON FOR ISRAELI RAIDING FORCE. WE OURSELVES SEE VERY LITTLE MILITARY SIGNIFICANCE IN IT. RAIDING PARTY HAS DEMONSTRATED THAT EGYPTIAN LINES ARE NOT SOLID AND CAN BE PENETRATED UNDER COVER OF DARK BY SMALL GROUPS. NEVERTHELESS, ONCE FORCE CROSSED CANAL AND THE ALARM WAS SOUNDED, IT WAS ALMOST INEVITABLE THAT IT BE STOPPED IN FAIRLY SHORT ORDER. AMOUNT OF DAMAGE IS NOT KNOWN BUT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN MINIMAL IN
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VIEW OF DEPTH OF PENETRATION. ANOTHER MILITARY OBJECTIVE

MAY HAVE BEEN TO FORCE EGYPTIANS INTO DRAWING TOGETHER LINES ON EAST BANK OF CANAL AND BUTTRESSING THEM WITH FORCES WHICH WOULD OTHERWISE HAVE BEEN STATIONED TO THE WEST, THEREBY WEAKENING WESTERN SECTOR. FOR VARIOUS REASONS THIS SEEMS UNLIKELY.

3. MOST PLAUSIBLE ALTERNATIVE APPEARS TO BE POLITICAL-- TO WIT, THAT ISRAELIS NEEDED TO REGISTER SUCCESS ON A FRONT WHERE THEY HAVE ACHIEVED VERY FEW SUCCESSES AND DECIDED TO SEND OVER RAIDING PARTY WHICH COULD BE ANNOUNCED BY MRS. MEIR TO KNESSET AND ISRAELI NATION. DELIBERATE DISPATCH OF WHAT WAS IN EFFECT A SUICIDE MISSION SUGGESTS HOW STRONG THIS NEED WAS.

4. FOR TEL AVIV: HAS IDF SPOKESMAN PROVIDED REASONS FOR RAID?
SMITH

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Message Attributes

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EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

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